



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

For Information Contact Public Affairs
SANDY RAYNOR
Telephone: (602) 514-7625
Cell: (602) 525-2681

"WIG BANDITS" FACE MORE FEDERAL CHARGES

PHOENIX - A federal grand jury in Phoenix returned a 12-count superseding indictment against Julio Cesar Feliciano, Jr., 45; Herardo Joaquin Islas, 22; Andrei Ulisses Chavez, 25; and Julie Castillo, 29, all of Phoenix; and Francisco Javier Serrano, 23, a Mexican citizen living in Phoenix, for Armed Bank Robbery, Use of a Firearm During a Crime of Violence, Conspiracy to Commit Armed Bank Robbery, Felon in Possession of a Firearm, Illegal Alien in Possession of a Firearm, and Re-entry after Deportation.

Feliciano and his associates were dubbed the "Wig Bandits" because they wore wigs in most of the robberies. Chavez was arrested on November 4, 2008, in Glendale, Ariz. by the Glendale Police Department. The other four defendants were arrested on August 12, 2008 by Glendale and Phoenix Police Officers in Avondale, Ariz. immediately after an armed bank robbery occurred. All defendants, except for Castillo, have been in custody during the on-going, FBI-lead investigation as they await trial.

The superseding indictment alleges that Feliciano robbed four Phoenix area banks between June 17, 2008 and August 12, 2008, and that he used a gun in each robbery. Serrano is charged with two of those robberies, in addition to illegally re-entering the U.S. after deportation and being a convicted felon in possession of a firearm. Islas and Castillo were indicted for their roles in the August 12, 2008 robbery, and Chavez was indicted for his role in a July 3, 2008 robbery that he allegedly committed with Feliciano in Glendale.

A conviction for Armed Bank Robbery carries a maximum penalty of 25 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine or both. A conviction for Use of a Firearm During a Crime of Violence carries a mandatory consecutive sentence of up to life, a \$250,000 fine, or both. A conviction for Conspiracy to Commit Armed Bank Robbery carries a maximum penalty of 5 years, a \$250,000 fine or both. A conviction for Felon in Possession of a Firearm and Illegal Alien in Possession of a Firearm each carry a maximum sentence of 10 years, a \$250,000 fine, or both, and Re-entry after Deportation carries a maximum sentence of 20 years, a \$250,000 fine or both. In determining an actual sentence, U.S. District Judge David G. Campbell will consult the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

The superseding indictment was returned on November 20, 2008 and adds counts 4-12 to the original indictment returned on August 19, 2008. An indictment is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The investigation preceding the superseding indictment was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Glendale Police Department and the Phoenix Police Department, with assistance from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Avondale Police Department. The prosecution is being handled by Alison S. Bachus, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-08-932-PHX-DGC
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